



Fairfax County Public Schools
Governor's Youth Development Academy
2014-15 Year-End Report

Introduction

The 2014-2015 Fairfax County Public School's (FCPS) Governor's Youth Development Academy (GYDA) exceeded all expectations. The GYDA Kick-off was on January 12, with the following 23 weeks packed with workshops, field trips, speakers, collaborative group projects, and individual student support and mentoring. The GYDA slogan, "Opportunity . Sparks . Change" was reflected in our goals and programming. By creating dynamic learning opportunities, the program impacted student's lives and attitudes.

Based on student data:

- 97% of GYDA students were glad they participated in the program
- 93% indicate improvement in study habits
- 82% say their grades improved as a result of participation in GYDA
- 89% report their confidence working in a group improved
- 75% are more confident making presentations or speaking in class
- 97% have an increased awareness of post-secondary options

Opportunity can spark change. Our GYDA students come from diverse backgrounds, most in the academic middle, many from lower income and immigrant families. The majority of GYDA students reported little exposure to college and post-secondary options prior to joining the Academy. What they have in common is a dream - where they see themselves in the future. The goal of GYDA is to create a positive learning environment and provide the support that enables students to succeed in reaching their dream.



GYDA
Office



Fairfax County

- Size: 407 square miles
- Population: 1,111,620
- Approximately one of every six residents is a public school student.



Fairfax County Public Schools and Centers 2014 - 15 total: 196

- Elementary (preschool - 6): 139
- Middle (6-8): 3 Middle (7-8): 20
- Secondary (7 - 12): 3 High (9 - 12): 22
- Alternative High Schools: 2 Special Education Centers: 7

Projected Enrollment

- 2014 - 15 total projected: 186,785
- Largest in Virginia 10th largest in U.S.

Demographics

- African American: 10.2%
- American Indian: 0.3%
- Asian American: 19.4%
- Hispanic: 24.6%
- Multiracial: 5.0%
- White: 40.4%

Students receiving free and reduced meals: 52,638

English for Speakers of Other languages (ESOL) students: 28,870

Students receiving special education services: 25,715



Located near the Potomac River between George Washington's Mount Vernon mansion and the City of Alexandria, West Potomac High School (WPHS) was established in 1985 by combining two proud former schools and their communities—Groveton and Fort Hunt. This year is the 30th anniversary of West Potomac. The faculty's focus this year includes engaging instruction for all, systems of student support, and community outreach. The school's motto is "Excellence is a Tradition" as West Potomac has always been known for setting a high bar of academic and personal achievement from all students.

Drawing from an area of Fairfax County that is economically, racially, and ethnically mixed, West Potomac serves one of the most widely diverse student bodies in Northern Virginia. Our 2,498 students come from more than 75 countries and speak 46 different languages in their homes. Socio-economic and ability levels are just as widely spread. Staff members and students alike benefit from this cross-cultural experience. West Potomac's diversity is an asset the school strongly celebrates.

West Potomac High School also maintains a close relationship with the community, local businesses, and the feeder schools in its pyramid. It continues to implement effective and evidence-based programs for the academic and extracurricular needs of all students. West Potomac offers a diversified and challenging academic program for all students, as well as a wide variety of college preparatory courses, including 27 Advanced Placement courses, two dual enrollment courses, robust electives in world languages, career and technical education, and the fine and performing arts. West Potomac students are active athletically, perform hundreds of hours of community service, and participate in a vibrant and renowned arts program.

Student Demographics:

White (not of Hispanic origin)- 40%

Black (not of Hispanic origin)- 19%

Asian- 7%

Hispanic- 30%

Other- 4%

40% of students qualify for the free or reduced-priced meals program

372 students participate in the program English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

GYDA Goals and Objectives

A facet of Fairfax County Public Schools' (FCPS) vision is to prepare all students for “education and employment opportunities beyond high school.” The FCPS Governor’s Youth Development Academy (GYDA) goal is to improve students’ college and career readiness and enhance personal strengths. The Academy achieves its goals by collaborating with community partners to increase the access and success of at-risk students in college and career readiness.

The FCPS GYDA uses a student-centered model that employs a case management approach to support students with lagging academic skills. Students receive services designed to promote awareness of post-secondary opportunities, to address common barriers to success, and to foster civic engagement as well as financial well-being. FCPS GYDA provides individualized support to help students connect academic success in high school with post-secondary and career options to increase personal success.



“Creating a Monster”, team-building activity at The EDGE at George Mason University

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) has selected West Potomac High School to implement the prestigious Governor's Youth Development Academy (GYDA), a year long program designed to boost the knowledge and skill-set of a select group of 9th and 10th grade students, preparing them to succeed in school, at home, and in the workplace.

Goals of the Academy

- Building personal strengths and developing the life skills necessary to succeed
- Creating dynamic learning opportunities that will impact students lives and attitudes
- Focusing on career and college readiness
- Developing a mentorship program utilizing WPHS seniors, college students, and adults
- Implementing an "exit plan" that encourages students to apply to WPHS College Success Programs
- Encouraging parent support and participation

Student Selection

- A maximum of 25, 9th graders and 25, 10th graders to be selected
- Students in the academic middle requiring additional support to maintain and hopefully improve their GPA and to stay on track for graduation
- Students who show a positive commitment to the program's goals, who demonstrate age-appropriate maturity and behavior, and who want to be college and career ready
- Student recommendations from counselors, teachers, and administrators

Curriculum/Project Content

Academy programs will be held after school on Mondays/Thursdays, during certain school holidays, and occasionally in the evenings. Content will focus on:

- Developing skills that boost academic success and personal growth
- Goal setting
- College and career planning and readiness
- Personal finances
- Civic engagement

The GYDA program will focus on student engagement and participation including:

- Regular, individual assessment, advising and mentoring sessions
- Workshops and seminars covering all content areas
- Field trips, including college campus tours and excursions to prominent institutions
- Guest speakers and activity leaders
- Socratic seminars, collaborative group projects, and roundtable discussions
- Standardized test prep
- Opportunities to discover and participate in social and cultural events

For more information, contact **GYDA Director, Cathie Grant-Goodman**, cmgrantgoodm@fcps.edu or 703-718-2749.

Communication



As the Academy was being established, there was a concerted effort to create the GYDA “brand”. A slogan and logo were developed. An intensive effort to market the program, maximize student awareness about the opportunity for participation, and build school and community support for GYDA was initiated through emails, presentations, student information meetings, the distribution of flyers, on-line promotion aimed at students and parents/guardians, and one-on-one sessions with students and faculty.

Throughout the duration of the program, communication with all stakeholders was a high priority. A weekly GYDA Update email to parents, students, and Student Leaders was initiated. A “Nice to Know” or “Need to Know” email distribution kept all WPHS faculty and staff informed. A steady flow of emails and phone calls to parents kept them informed about their student’s individual success with discussion of any problem areas and subsequent solutions. The development of a close working relationship with school counselors was key in providing encouragement and needed support/guidance to GYDA students. The GYDA Director firmly believes that face-to-face contact should be a top priority in developing support for students and the program. Calling on a wide circle of personal contacts, the Director was able to engage exceptional speakers and organizations to provide unique opportunities for GYDA students.

GYDA Leadership and Support

- Sylinda Banks, Education Specialist, FCPS School Counseling Office
- Alexander Case, Principal, West Potomac High School
- Kevin McMahon, Director, Student Services, West Potomac High School
- Cathie Grant-Goodman, Director, Governor’s Youth Development Academy

Additional support is provided by the FCPS School Counseling Office, West Potomac HS faculty and staff including the nine WPHS Counselors and the WPHS Career Center Specialist, community advisors, numerous volunteers, including GYDA assistant Sharon Mason, GYDA parents and students.



*West Potomac HS
Principal
Alexander Case
and
Asst. Superintendent
Deborah Tyler*

Field trip chaperones



Student Leaders



15 GYDA Student Leaders, juniors and seniors, were recruited for their leadership and mentoring skills. They are in the AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) program, the National Honor Society, and the College Partnership Program.

Student Leaders were required to submit an application, take part in an interview and participate in training.

Student leaders were expected to attend GYDA meetings and participate in field trips, facilitate small group activities and mentor students. All 15 Student Leaders attended at least 2 events and a core group of 6 supported GYDA students the majority of the time. It was a rewarding experience for all involved. Student leaders received no payment, but were given community service hours and received special awards at the GYDA Celebration.





Governor's Youth Development Academy

STUDENT LEADERS

FCPS has selected West Potomac HS to implement the prestigious Governor's Youth Development Academy (GYDA), a year long program designed to boost the knowledge and skill-set of a select group of 9th and 10th grade students, preparing them to succeed in school, at home, and in the workplace.

We are recruiting West Potomac Seniors who exhibit strong leadership and mentoring skills to be a part of this program. As part of the after school portion, we will be conducting dynamic events that will require you to be engaged in facilitating groups and assisting with activities. You will also be invited to participate in our exciting field trips, celebrations, career exploration, and civic engagement outings.

If you are interested in this unique opportunity, please fill out the information below and return the form to Ms. Cathie Grant-Goodman, Director, GYDA, Room 313. If you have any questions, please drop by her office or email cmgrantgoodm@fcps.edu

GOVERNOR'S YOUTH DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY – STUDENT LEADER APPLICATION FORM

NAME:

EMAIL:

STREET ADDRESS:

PHONE NUMBERS:

WHAT GROUP ARE YOU CONNECTED TO? (AVID, SGA, CPP, NHS, Etc.):

DO YOU SPEAK ANY LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH?

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

DO YOU HAVE A CAREER IN MIND?

WHAT ARE YOUR INTERESTS/HOBBIES?

Please hand in the bottom, application portion of this form to Ms. Grant-Goodman, Room 313 (beside the College and Career Center), no later than **Monday, December 1**. Thank you for your support of GYDA!

Community advisors/partners

GYDA was honored to work with the following community partners and advisors:

- The U.S. Department of State
- Northern Virginia Community College
- George Mason University
- The National Society of Collegiate Scholars
- Apple Federal Credit Union
- Rhoda Wheeler, Northern VA Business and Marketing Consultant
- Helene Longden, Fairfax, VA Social Worker and certified Life Coach
- Dr. Jon Thomas, Psychologist, college success program specialist
- Fort Belvoir, U.S. Army Reserve Unit (Transportation)
Staff Sergeant Jose Camacho, U.S. Army Recruiting Office
- The office of Virginia Congressman Don Beyer
- Bernard and Sandra DiMuro, DiMuro Ginsberg Law Firm, Alexandria, VA



U.S. Army Reserves, Fort Belvoir



Apple Federal Credit Union



Northern Virginia Community College and students from the National Society of Collegiate Scholars, a national honor/leadership organization

Student Selection

In order to start the GYDA program right after the winter break, it was crucial to begin student selection right after the GYDA Director was hired in late November. It was determined that GYDA students should have the following characteristics:

- Students in the academic middle. They could be struggling in some subjects, but not all.
- Students who show at least some motivation in wanting to succeed academically and personally
- Students who are curious and would be open to the many opportunities presented
- Students who may be at risk of not graduating on time
- In addition, all participants must demonstrate age-appropriate maturity and behavior, including attendance, and possess the intellectual ability to pursue college preparation curriculum and post-secondary study.

Students were recommended by WPHS counselors, with a few teacher referrals and students who self-selected.

Those selected were asked by Principal Alexander Case to attend a special meeting concerning a unique opportunity. Students walked in sheepishly, expecting they were in trouble. They were relieved and excited when they opened a “congratulatory” information letter, with an invitation to discuss the program with their parents/guardians, and then submit the application and accompanying student questionnaire. Individual and small group interviews ensued with admitted students informed by email before winter break.

In order to maximize numbers (50 participants total), the recruitment process continued throughout January. A few students dropped out of the program- some not interested, others found they had conflicts such as babysitting siblings after school. The majority of the original group attended most meetings and field trips unless they needed to work with teachers after school.

What started out as a diverse, mostly shy group of teenagers turned into a cohesive unit of motivated, engaged and caring students.



Congratulations!

December 8, 2014

As a remarkable student, with great potential, **you have been nominated** to participate in the ***Governor's Youth Development Academy (GYDA)*** at West Potomac High School. Only 25, 9th graders and 25, 10th graders will be selected for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, that is offered at no cost to participants.

West Potomac is one of only 8 high schools in Virginia selected to implement the *Governor's Youth Development Academy*, a dynamic program designed to boost the knowledge and skill-set of a select group of students, preparing them to succeed in school, at home, and in the workplace.

Goals:

- Building personal strengths and developing the life skills necessary to succeed
- Creating dynamic learning opportunities that will impact students' lives and attitudes

Basic Details:

- Students will be selected and notified before Winter Break. The Academy will run from January to June, 2015.
- Academy programs will be held during Wolverine Time, after school on Mondays or Thursdays when late buses are available, during school holidays (Spring Break), and occasionally in the evening (Parent-Student Celebrations)

Unique Opportunities:

- Individual support and mentoring sessions
- Distinguished guest speakers and workshop leaders
- Timely, engaging content covering College and Career planning, personal finances, civic engagement and community service, leading to self-discovery and personal growth
- Local and out of town field trips, including college campus tours and excursions to prominent institutions
- Opportunities to discover and participate in exceptional social and cultural events
- West Potomac Seniors , "Student Leaders", providing program assistance and student mentorship
- Closing Celebration/Awards Night

Student Expectations:

- To act responsibly and to show respect for oneself and others
- To attend and participate fully in GYDA programs
- To maintain a positive and open-minded attitude

Please look through this information and discuss it with your parents/guardians. If you would like to participate in the *Governor's Youth Development Academy*, a prestigious program offered to only a small group of students, **Fill out the attached application form and student questionnaire and return it to the Student Services Office by Friday, Dec. 12, 2014.**

For more information, contact Ms. Cathie Grant-Goodman, Director, *Governor's Youth Development Academy*, Room 313, email: cmgrantgoodm@fcps.edu

GYDA Application 2014-2015

I am very interested in being considered for the Governor's Youth Development Academy at West Potomac High School. I have read the GYDA information sheet and I agree to all of the participant expectations. I also commit to attending the unique events, activities, and field trips offered by GYDA.

Student Name:

Grade:

Address:

Telephone:

Email Address:

What languages are spoken in your home?

Student Signature

Parent/Guardian Information and Consent

I support my child's desire to participate in the Governor's Youth Development Academy. I understand that if my child is selected, I will work with him/her to ensure that all student expectations are met and that he/she attends the unique events, activities, and field trips offered by GYDA.

Parent/Guardian Names:

Parent/Guardian Email Address:

Parent/Guardian Telephone Numbers:

Parent/Guardian Signatures:



Student Name: _____

Student Application Questionnaire

1. What do you like most about school? Why?

2. What do you like least about school? Why?

3. What class do you feel is your strongest subject? Why?

4. How would your teachers describe you as a student?

5. How would you describe yourself?

6. Explain what you would like to do after High School.

7. If you were told to step outside of your comfort zone to explore something new, what would it be? Explain.

Please return the two page application form to the Student Services Office by Friday, Dec. 12.

If you would like more information or have any questions, contact:

*Ms. Cathie Grant-Goodman, Director, Governor's Youth Development Academy,
Room 313 (beside the Career Center) or email: cmgrantgoodm@fcps.edu*

Who are FCPS GYDA students?

50 GYDA students

10th graders (22 participants):

- 13 females
- 9 males
- 15 students on free/reduced lunch
- Black- 6
Hispanic-10
White- 4
Asian- 1
Black/White- 1
- Languages spoken in addition to English:
Spanish- 8
Twi- 2
Bengali- 1
Krio- 1
- 13 students were born in the U.S. The remaining 9 students were born in a variety of countries including El Salvador, Ghana, Senegal, Japan, and Bangladesh.
- ESOL: 12 students ranging from L4-L10



At the U.S. Capitol

9th graders (28 participants)

- 19 females
- 9 males
- 19 students on free/reduced lunch
- Black- 15
Hispanic- 9
White- 2
Asian- 2
- Languages spoken in addition to English:
Spanish- 8
Twi- 5
Urdu- 2
Amanaric- 1
- 24 students were born in the U.S.
Four students were born in Ghana
- ESOL: 9 students ranging from L3-L6



At "The EDGE" at George Mason University

The GYDA program benefits from our diverse group of students, whose families come from the following countries: El Salvador, Ghana, Senegal, South Korea, Spain, Sierra Leone, Japan, the Philippines, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Columbia, Honduras, Ethiopia, Jordan, and Puerto Rico

Curriculum

There was a flow to the GYDA program starting with:

Personal growth activities (self-advocacy, confidence, motivation) ➡ team-building, developing good communication skills ➡ academic success by adopting good organization, time management, and note-taking skills ➡ Goal setting ➡ Determining individual skills and interests, what is your dream? ➡ Career exploration ➡ College prep and discovery ➡ Civic engagement and community service ➡ Financial literacy ➡ Standardized test prep and boosting study skills ➡ My personal road to college ➡ Exit plan for all students

GYDA Exit plan

Students were given the support and resources necessary for them to continue on their upward journey after leaving the program:

- Exploration of college success programs offered at West Potomac HS. Encouragement to join clubs and organizations
- Completion of their 4 year “Personal Road to College” activity
- Review of school resources for continued personal and academic growth
- List of mentors/tutors
- Summer reading books and activities provided
- Completion of GYDA binders
- Guidance on summer volunteer activities/jobs/internships
- Reflection on what was learned in GYDA and how to apply to remaining high school years
- Star activity- on a cardboard star, each student writing down words/sentences that would help motivate them when they were going through a tough time
- Goals for following school year
- Final activity- The EDGE, an incredible rope course challenge focused on problem solving, collaboration, communication, self-determination, and making good choices



Working on “My Personal Road to College” project

GYDA Timeline/Calendar of Events

*All meetings were held on late bus days, Mondays and Thursdays from 2:30-4:30pm

*At the start of each meeting, students were expected to sign-in, put on their name badge, take their GYDA binder, grab a snack, and then sit at assigned tables. The GYDA Director provided upcoming event information, students updated their binders, and time was given for Q & A and table discussions.

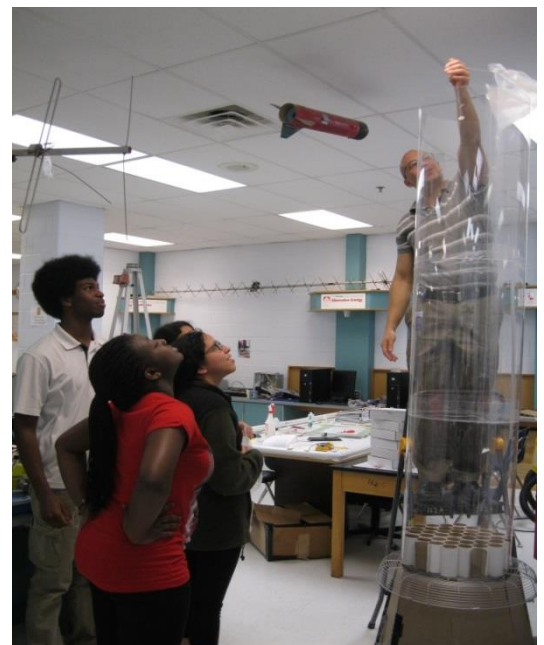
* Student advising/counseling was held daily during Wolverine Time, a period dedicated to remediation and academic enrichment.



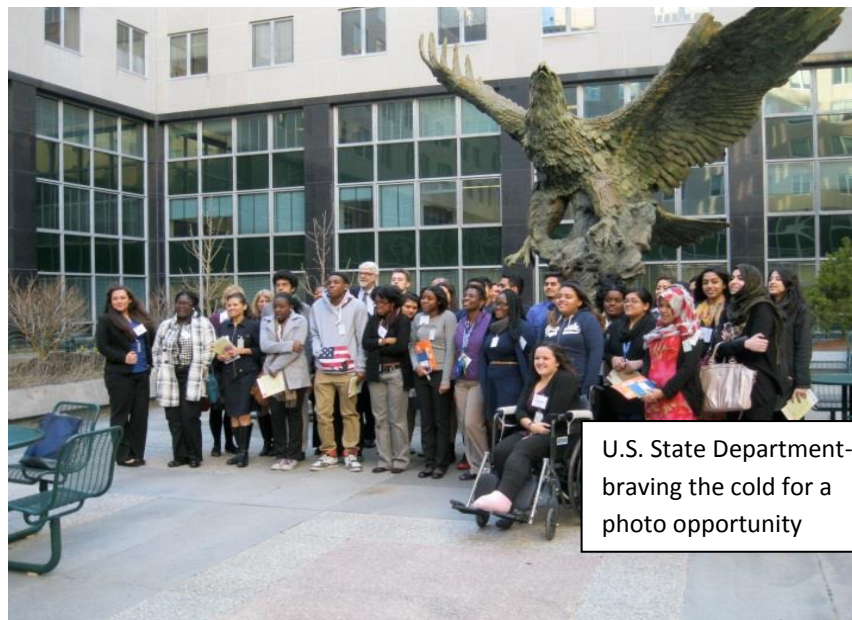
Looking through GYDA binders at the end-of-the year GYDA Celebration

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| November 17: | GYDA Director starts. Office set-up, development of program focus, design of GYDA logo with slogan "Opportunity . Sparks . Change", marketing of program to students, parents, staff and faculty |
| November 27/28: | Thanksgiving break |
| December 1-19: | Student recruitment, individual and group interviews, program planning |
| December 22- January 5: | Winter Break |

Wind tunnel experiment with Engineering, Architecture, and Technology Instructor, Joseph Franco



- January 8: Snow Day postponing GYDA Kick-off
- January 12: GYDA Kick-off with guest speakers Alexander Case, West Potomac Principal and Deborah Tyler, Assistant Superintendent, Cluster 3. Ice-breaker activities, pizza, and discussion of program and student involvement and responsibilities
- January 15: Etiquette and Communication presentation and activities by Rhoda Wheeler, educator and marketing and business consultant. Student organization- binder set-up, school planners, and Cornell notes
- January 19: Martin Luther King holiday
- January 22: Goal setting, exploring your passion, establishing an “accountability” partner with Helene Longden, social worker and certified life coach
- January 26: Snow Day, meeting cancelled
- January 29: End of quarter, 2 hour early release
- January 30: **GYDA Field Trip** to the U.S. Department of State- tours, briefings, and panel presentations planned specifically for GYDA students



- February 2: Student holiday
- February 3: Curriculum Night for parents- academic advising, curriculum presentations and electives information
- February 5: Reflection on State Department visit, guest presenter/motivational speaker Derek Steele, regional AVID (Advancement via Individual Determination) Director, focusing on how to reach your dream

- February 9: Career workshop with College and Career Center Specialist Kellie Stewart- Introduction to FCPS Family Connections, online activities- *Strengths Explorer, Using Your Talents, Career Exploration*
- February 12: Academic Advising workshop with Kevin McMahon, WPHS Director of Student Services. Discussion of GYDA Art Project (notecards)
- February 16: President's Day holiday
- February 19: Guest presenter, Tony Blackman, Criminal Justice teacher- his amazing life story, careers in law enforcement and criminal justice. Roundtable discussions on gun control and the death penalty



Tony Blackman, voted "best motivational speaker" by GYDA students

- February 23: Snow Day- field trip to Northern Virginia Community College postponed
- February 26: Snow Day
- March 2: Snow Day
- March 5: Snow Day
- March 9: Guest presenter Joelle Giron focusing on life as a first generation student, nursing careers, and working with the Peace Corps. "Speed Mentoring" activity with Student Leaders and adult mentors
- March 12: AVID information session and AVID student led training on binder organization, how to use planners, and taking Cornell notes
- March 16: Student holiday
- March 19: No Meeting, GYDA Director singing at Carnegie Hall
- March 19: Evening event for parents- College Admissions Panel

March 23: **GYDA Field Trip** to George Mason University, hosted by the National Society of College Scholars, GMU Admissions office, and LEAD (Leadership, Education, and Development)



Team-building exercise conducted by L.E.A.D at George Mason University

March 26: Daryl Mackey, VA businessman, motivational speaker and financial literacy instructor on marketing and business careers, goal setting and making the right choices. Two young entrepreneurs with successful apparel and entertainment companies made presentations.

March 30: **Spring Break- GYDA Field Trip** to Virginia Commonwealth University and the University of Richmond



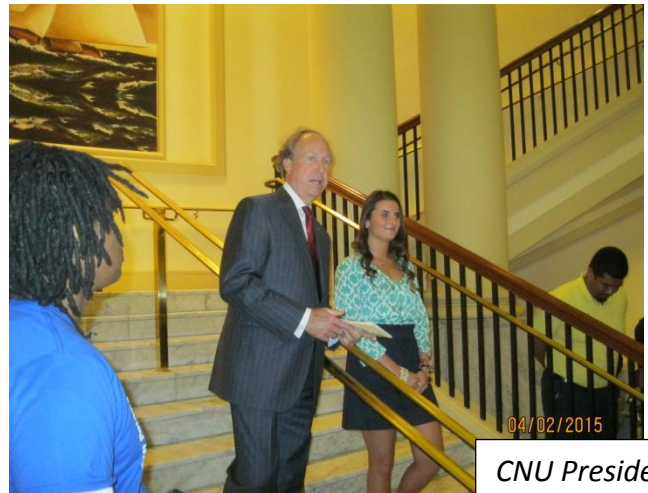
The University of Richmond, a beautiful campus and excellent scholarship opportunities

April 2:

Spring Break- GYDA Field Trip to Old Dominion University and Christopher Newport University. At CNU, activities/discussion/pizza with Newport News GYDA students and leaders



ODU gym and track facility



*CNU President
Paul Tribble*



*Group shot of FCPS and Newport
News GYDA students – having a
great time at CNU!*



*"College Bingo" activity
with FCPS and Newport
News GYDA students*

- April 6: Student holiday
- April 9: Interactive, hands-on science activities and discussion of engineering, architecture, and technical careers with aerospace engineer and STEM instructor, Joe Franco. Engineering society students assisted and provided prizes!
- April 11: Torpedo Factory (Visual Arts Center)- GYDA families invited to Young Artist's Showcase involving GYDA student, who worked with a professional artist/mentor for 6 months
- April 13: Oral presentation workshop conducted by GYDA Director, which included students selecting a topic, preparing and then presenting a two minute speech in front of group
- April 16: End of quarter, 2 hour early release
- April 17: **GYDA Field Trip** to Northern Virginia Community College, hosted by the National Society of Collegiate Scholars, NOVA Admissions and NOVA Pathways to the Baccalaureate



GYDA students with members of the National Society of Collegiate Scholars, NOVA chapter

- April 20: The new PSAT- test prep by Applerouth Tutoring
- April 22: **GYDA Field Trip** to the U.S. Capitol and Library of Congress, involving a scavenger hunt, tours, briefing and Q & A with staff members from the offices of Senator Mark Warner and Congressman Don Beyer, and watching a debate from the House of Representatives Visitor's Gallery



GYDA students at the U.S. Capitol with staff members from the office of Virginia Senator Mark Warner and Congressman Don Beyer

- April 23: The new PSAT- test prep by Applerouth Tutoring
- April 25: Mock PSAT test
- April 27: PSAT tests returned, review by Applerouth Tutoring
- April 30: Motivational speaker, Dovi Fiavi, whose family emigrated from Togo. Ms. Fiavi discussed assimilating into American society and her journey to Cornell University. Tutoring sessions- prep for SOLs
- May 4: Project Discovery presentation and “My Personal Road to College” project
- May 7: Dr. Jon Thomas, psychologist, college success specialist
- May 11: Study skills session by Applerouth Tutoring
- May 14: College Partnership Program presentation. Tutoring prep for SOLs and final exams
- May 16: **GYDA Field Trip**- Explore Fort Belvoir, hosted by a U.S. Army Reserve (transportation) Unit. Lunch and bowling (team-building activity) with soldiers at Fort Belvoir



Connecting with the military



Bowling at Fort Belvoir

- May 18: Colonel Gary Bullard, his military journey. Tutoring for SOLs and finals
- May 21: Financial Literacy presentation and activity by Apple Federal Credit Union
- May 25: Memorial Day holiday
- May 28: Liberty’s Promise presentation, tutoring for SOLs and finals, finishing “My Personal Road to College” project
- June 1: GYDA survey and questionnaire, Celebration planning, individual “exit” plans, including summer job, internship, and volunteer opportunities
- June 4: GYDA survey and questionnaire, Celebration planning, individual “exit” plans, including summer job, internship, and volunteer opportunities

June 10: GYDA end-of-the year Celebration - Check out a GYDA student's you tube video!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o6JACM6AHYo&feature=youtu.be>



June 15-19:

Final exams, individual student meetings, wrapping up

June 20:

GYDA Field Trip to “The EDGE” at George Mason University, Prince William campus.

Rope course challenge focused on problem solving in a group setting, cooperation in achieving a common goal, active listening and effective communication, and making choices.



Evaluation

GYDA Student Data

| FCPS Governor's Youth Development Academy | Pre-Program Survey | End-of-year Survey |
|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| | Jan-15 | Jun-15 |
| Grade | | |
| 9th grade | 55.56% | 55.17% |
| 10th grade | 44.44% | 44.83% |
| | | |
| Gender | | |
| Female | 81.48% | 71.43% |
| Male | 18.52% | 28.57% |
| | | |
| I enjoy/have enjoyed my classes at West Potomac HS. | | |
| Strongly agree | 22.22% | 48.28% |
| Somewhat agree | 62.96% | 44.83% |
| Neither agree or disagree | 14.81% | 3.45% |
| Disagree | 0% | 3.45% |
| Strongly disagree | 0% | 0% |
| | | |
| I am/have been successful in _____ classes. | | |
| All classes | 37.04% | 41.38% |
| Core classes (math, science, Social studies, English) | 11.11% | 10.34% |
| Some core classes and elective classes | 51.85% | 48.28% |
| Elective classes only | 0% | 0% |
| No classes | 0% | 0% |
| | | |
| My grades are a good reflection of my ability. | | |
| Strongly agree | 14.81% | 27.59% |
| Agree | 55.56% | 48.28% |
| Do not agree | 22.22% | 20.69% |
| I do not know | 7.41% | 3.45% |
| | | |
| My grades have improved as a result of my participation in GYDA. | | |
| Strongly agree | | 28.57% |
| Agree | | 53.57% |
| Do not agree | | 14.29% |
| I do not know | | 3.57% |
| | | |

| FCPS Governor's Youth Development Academy | Pre-Program Survey | End-of-year Survey |
|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| | | |
| My time management skills | | |
| have improved as a result of my participation in GYDA. | | |
| Strongly agree | | 28.57% |
| Agree | | 53.57% |
| Do not agree | | 14.29% |
| I do not know | | 3.57% |
| | | |
| My organization skills have | | |
| improved as a result of my participation in GYDA. | | |
| Strongly agree | | 31.03% |
| Agree | | 48.28% |
| Do not agree | | 13.79% |
| I do not know | | 6.90% |
| | | |
| I use the following strategies to organize my school work. | | |
| Weekly planner | 23.08% | 51.72% |
| Write assignments and exams on a calendar | 15.38% | 24.14% |
| Keep all of my papers organized in notebooks/binders | 76.92% | 75.86% |
| Make "to do" list | 26.92% | 44.83% |
| I do not use any strategies | 15.38% | 6.90% |
| | | |
| My study habits have improved as a | | |
| result of my participation in GYDA. | | |
| Strongly agree | | 31.03% |
| Agree | | 48.28% |
| Do not agree | | 13.79% |
| I do not know | | 6.90% |
| | | |
| I use the following strategies to help me succeed in my | | |
| classes. | | |
| Take good notes in class | 92.31% | 82.76% |
| Complete all class assignments | 73.08% | 75.86% |
| Complete all homework assignments | 61.54% | 65.52% |
| Review class material each night | 19.23% | 17.24% |
| Study in a quiet place | 30.77% | 34.48% |
| Study 1-3 hours each night | 11.54% | 13.79% |
| Study for exams and quizzes | 42.31% | 58.62% |
| | | |

| FCPS Governor's Youth Development Academy | Pre-Program Survey | End-of-year Survey |
|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| When I have a question or problem in class, I ask my teacher for help. | | |
| All the time | 22.22% | 28.57% |
| Most of the time | 37.04% | 57.14% |
| Some of the time | 37.04% | 14.29% |
| Not at all | 3.70% | 0% |
| My confidence when making presentations or speaking in class has improved as a result of my participation in GYDA. | | |
| Strongly agree | | 39.29% |
| Agree | | 35.71% |
| Do not agree | | 14.29% |
| I do not know | | 10.71% |
| | | |
| My confidence when working in a group has improved as a result of my participation in GYDA. | | |
| Strongly agree | | 53.57% |
| Agree | | 35.71% |
| Do not agree | | 10.71% |
| I do not know | | 0% |
| | | |
| I set short-term and long-term goals. | | |
| All the time | 40.74% | 44.83% |
| Most of the time | 29.63% | 37.93% |
| Some of the time | 25.93% | 17.24% |
| Not at all | 3.70% | 0% |
| | | |
| To identify a good career option for me after high school graduation, I have completed the following: | | |
| Interests/skills questionnaires | 51.85% | 75.86% |
| Linked my interests/skills to careers | 62.96% | 68.97% |
| Visited the West Potomac College & Career Center | 18.52% | 58.62% |
| Logged on to Family Connections | 51.85% | 72.41% |
| Visited colleges/universities | 33.33% | 75.86% |
| Talked to my school counselor | 37.04% | 41.38% |
| Researched careers on the internet | 62.96% | 82.76% |
| Talked to my parents/mentors/professionals in the job | 48.15% | 65.52% |
| I have not completed any activities | 0% | 3.45% |
| | | |

| FCPS Governor's Youth Development Academy | Pre-Program Survey | End-of-year Survey |
|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Once I graduate from West Potomac, my goal is to attend/enter: | | |
| Community College (2 year program) | 7.69% | 3.45% |
| Community College with plans to transfer to a 4 year university/college | 19.23% | 17.24% |
| University or 4-year college | 50.00% | 75.86% |
| Military | 11.54% | 0% |
| Workforce | 3.85% | 0% |
| Not sure | 7.69% | 3.45% |
| | | |
| I have a better understanding of the education and/or training needed to obtain my career goal. | | |
| Yes | | 92.59% |
| No | | 0% |
| Not sure | | 7.41% |
| | | |
| I am aware of the college success programs at West Potomac. | | |
| AVID-Advancement via Individual Determination | 68.00% | 96.43% |
| CPP- College Partnership Program | 16.00% | 46.43% |
| EIP- Early Identification Program | 0% | 10.71% |
| Liberty's Promise | 0% | 57.14% |
| Project Discovery | 8.00% | 39.29% |
| NOVA Pathways | 8.00% | 46.43% |
| | | |
| Participating in GYDA has helped me: | | |
| | | |
| <i>Improve in completing my school work</i> | | |
| Strongly agree | | 34.48% |
| Agree | | 51.72% |
| Disagree | | 10.34% |
| Strongly disagree | | 3.46% |
| | | |
| <i>Improve my study habits</i> | | |
| Strongly agree | | 42.86% |
| Agree | | 50.00% |
| Disagree | | 3.57% |
| Strongly disagree | | 3.57% |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

| | | |
|---|--|--------|
| Participating in GYDA has helped me: | | |
| | | |
| <i>Identifying options after graduating (college, military, work)</i> | | |
| Strongly agree | | 62.07% |
| Agree | | 31.03% |
| Disagree | | 3.45% |
| Strongly disagree | | 3.45% |
| | | |
| <i>Make better choices</i> | | |
| Strongly agree | | 48.28% |
| Agree | | 37.93% |
| Disagree | | 6.90% |
| Strongly disagree | | 6.90% |
| | | |
| <i>Understand different college/university campuses through college visits</i> | | |
| Strongly agree | | 68.97% |
| Agree | | 27.59% |
| Disagree | | 3.45% |
| Strongly disagree | | 0% |
| | | |
| <i>I am glad I participated in GYDA</i> | | |
| Strongly agree | | 86.21% |
| Agree | | 10.34% |
| Disagree | | 3.45% |
| Strongly disagree | | 0% |
| | | |

“Yeah!” I’ve made the
A/B Honor Roll.



GYDA PARENT COMMENTS 2015

"The GYDA program is one of the best school programs that my child and I have been exposed to. She has not only taken part in constructive school activities, but her view of the importance of college has improved. She has clearly set her mind that she will go to college, because GYDA has helped her to make and remain firm on that decision. "

"She is definitely more responsible in the completion of her school assignments. She is excited - yes, excited! that she will be taking her PSAT & SAT soon. GYDA has instilled in her the importance of setting goals, and she is not aimlessly going about her daily routine. "

"I really hope that GYDA will continue for our child next year as well. I believe that this is one of the main reasons she is focused on a college future ahead; otherwise, I feel that if there was no GYDA, perhaps the child could go in an unfavorable direction of bunking, irresponsibility, and no respect for the positive future we are trying to provide for her. "

"I would like to thank GYDA for being a good role model for our child."

"I think the GYDA program is a very good program for high school students. It is a fun, informative, educational, enlightening program. It's an experience that my daughter will never forget."

"I'm hoping this program will return next year. This program has educated my daughter in college, business and testing preparation. It has stretched her thinking as far as her career and continuing her education. There's nothing I would want to change as of now. I really hope this program is funded for next year."

"His words when he got in the car were "Mason is awesome, I want to go there." He has never previously expressed any interest in college...indeed, quite the opposite. He loved the team building thing you did, which is also atypical for him. I can't wait for him to see the Richmond/Norfolk schools. THANKS...this is so good for him."

"We have an excellent impression of the program. We very much appreciate a school activity that encourages such focus on preparing for the future. It helps reinforce a similar message we provide to all our children, but it helps that you include such fantastic field trips and guest speakers. My son was most impressed and excited by what he saw at the Library of Congress. I know GYDA had a very positive impact on his outlook. Thank you for the extra care, effort and guidance your program provided our son."

"Just a quick note to again say "thanks" for all you did for our son this year. It was a tough one for all of us, but you did succeed in expanding his view and I am deeply grateful for your efforts. We want to let you know how much we appreciate you and the program. If you ever need a testimonial for the class, just let me know!"

GYDA PARENT COMMENTS 2015 (continued)

"GYDA is a valuable intervention program that provides a structured environment and extended academic guidance to youth who might not otherwise have resources available to them. The program at West Potomac High School, directed by Cathie Grant Goodman, is well-managed and supported by a group of adults who truly care about the future of the teen participants."

"This program was expertly crafted with inspirational speakers, team building exercises, and college visits; the program provided opportunities for individual participants to learn about themselves and support about how to develop critical milestones on their path to success. The participants represented diverse backgrounds, and the program fostered multi-cultural learning opportunities that will ultimately strengthen the pipeline of under-represented students."

"The GYDA program made a significant impact (or should I say HUGE impact), both personally and academically, on my daughter. Over the course of the school year, and because of this program, she went from not thinking she could get into a four year school, to (at the end of 10th grade) having at least three colleges selected to which she plans to apply. The GYDA program has played a critical part in my daughters understanding of what she needs to do to plan her academic future."

"My daughter, on her own, has taken the initiative to move forward on her path to attending a four-year school: she took a mock ACT test, is practicing writing her application essays, and has made strategic changes to next year's coursework, all to prepare her for a four-year college experience. She had a very tough year and was hospitalized for quite some time. Ms. Grant-Goodman stayed in touch with our family and encouraged my daughter to keep attending the program even though she had missed quite a few meetings and events. My daughter understands that success is based on a variety of factors including community and family support, taking initiatives for oneself, and planning for one's future. Her health issues also presented her an opportunity to realize that planning one's future is very much an organic process."

GYDA STUDENT COMMENTS 2015

"A lot of the speakers that came to talk to us impacted me. They inspired me to follow my own path through life."

"I realized college isn't as scary as I once believed and working hard is worth it."

"Personally I've grown as a student and my vision towards college has changed dramatically for the better. This program truly showed me that I can be successful. One of the guest speakers was Mr. Blackman who inspired me and introduced me into the world of criminal justice and now it is my dream."

"The opportunities presented to me in GYDA impacted my life because it helped me academically and also to get organized."

"This was the first time I ever visited a college. The college visits actually made me find the college I am interested in attending- the University of Richmond."

"The college field trips inspired me to graduate high school and go to NYU or ODU."

GYDA STUDENT COMMENTS 2015 (continued)

"When we had visitors come to the meetings and they would talk about their jobs and the struggles they went through, it made me believe that if they could do it, so could I."

"It has been amazing. I've overcome my shyness in speaking in front of a crowd and I've made many more friends."

"These opportunities have impacted my life by getting me ready for college."

"The college visits inspired me into working hard in school so I can actually go to one of those colleges."

"GYDA has inspired me to never stop going after your dream."

"It has directed me in a much clearer path to what I want to do in life. The college visits showed me what could happen if I work hard and stay focused."

"GYDA has made me realize that although some things may seem very hard to achieve, if you're around the right people and take time to do your research, you can achieve anything- whether it's going to college, joining the military, achieving a goal, etc."

"All the college visits inspired me because in a few years I could see myself walking on those campuses. Visiting colleges inspires/motivates me to work harder."

"The time Mr. Blackman came to speak to us, it was the most inspiring thing ever. I learned so much and his story really moved me. It made me realize there are so many opportunities out there and you just have to be brave, strong, and look for them."

GYDA STUDENT LEADER COMMENTS 2015

"I think that GYDA is a good program to have in school because it informs students about different opportunities and it helps them explore and understand themselves more. It helps them get a better idea of what they might like to do in the future by researching the career of their interest. I also think that GYDA is a good program because students get the opportunity to interact with other students not only in school but also outside school, for example in field trips."

"Even though I could not attend many of the GYDA sessions, the few times that I was able to go it was fun and interesting to be able to speak to younger students and see what their thoughts of college were at a younger age. I learned that many of these students have very big dreams for their future and if they continue to be involved in this program they will learn the information they need to complete their dreams and succeed. Being a student leader for GYDA made me feel happy because it made me realize that I could make a difference in the lives of other people and also because I knew that I was doing something good for younger students, it's nice to be able to help others."

GYDA STUDENT LEADER COMMENTS 2015 (Continued)

“ I really liked the way GYDA works, I think it is set up in a really organized way. Students get to hear motivational speakers, they get to explore careers and colleges and not only that but they also get to work together in teams and learn things from each other. I think that the program is balanced so that the students can get a little of everything.”

“I’m sure I speak on behalf of all student leaders when I say that GYDA is a magnificent program. This program is a great way for students to interact and start their road to a fruitful future. This program allows for students to become aware of their goals in the future and discover paths for achieving them.”

“As a student leader I was able to feel as though I was making a difference. I was able to communicate with an assortment of students, with different strengths and weaknesses. These students were more like my friends. Going on the college field trips was more of a bonding time for the entire group. We are all so grateful for all the opportunities that the program has provided us. I learned so much from the college trips and the guest speakers; it has started me on my road to success.

Conclusion

This end-of-the year report documents the many successes of GYDA, including students’ overwhelming, positive assessment of their participation in the program and improvement in both personal and academic achievement.

As you may know, we have reapplied for the grant for 2015-16. If approved, the following are opportunities for growth next year:

- Developing new community partners and strengthening ties with individuals and organizations that supported the 2015 GYDA program
- Building on the established GYDA brand within West Potomac High School through active collaboration with faculty and staff
- Increasing parent involvement in the program

We would like to thank the Virginia Department of Education for providing the grant that enabled our student success this year. A special thank-you is extended to Maribel Saimre, DOE Student Services, for her dedication and support of GYDA.